

Marriage Ceremony

(For Guests and Family, Longer Ceremony)

"We are gathered here today to witness and to celebrate the joining together of _____ and _____ in the holy estate of marriage. More than a ceremony, this is the most significant moment of human celebration and personal commitment and should not be entered into lightly, but in the freedom of joy and sober responsibility."

"On this, the most important day in your lives, you, _____, and you, _____, have asked that your gratitude be expressed to all those who are here today — your family and friends — for being with you and sharing your happiness."

"You have asked your family present to join you, to be with you at this moment of your greatest joy. You are making a commitment to your families that this joining will increase the love between all of you."

"You now stand here as two individuals at the dawn of your life as one. Through your relationship, you have come to know, respect and love each other. Although your backgrounds and experience are different, you share the same goals and ideals. Today you are making the deepest commitment of your lives as you acknowledge your intention to be married and with it your promise of trust and devotion to each other. From this point on, you will think first of this union you are now creating, and how you may strengthen it."

"Marriage presents a possibility not only for gratification; but also for enrichment. Marriage should be a means for the development of those personal and social values that we prize so highly: Integrity, cooperation, self-respect and human dignity. Remember that love grows with an understanding mind, a compassionate, helpful heart and a forgiving, loving nature."

"This ceremony formally unites you in marriage, but only you can unite with each other in your hearts. The bond uniting you is the entire meaning. We hope your companionship will bring you strength and your life is enriched by affection and mutual respect bringing peace and contentment."

"A marriage is many things. But a good marriage is a relationship of love. Essentially, to be in love means to have a deep sense of identification with another person. It is to live in the life of that person, feeling his or her joys and troubles as if they were your own. And when two people are truly in love, each is concerned with helping the other become what he or she ought to be. The husband wants to nourish the best qualities of his wife; the wife wants to develop what is good in her husband."

"There should be a sharing of your lives. Your lives should be a life together. But there should also be space in your togetherness. Allow each other room and privacy to be individuals, with hearts and minds of your own. For only by being a whole person can you have something to give to the one that you love. Each of you should keep the freedom of spirit which individually brought you to stand here together today."

"In sharing the most intimate relationship of husband and wife, there will be times of stress, sacrifice and sorrow. May you face them together and overcome adversity with the same love, understanding and faith in each other that you feel at this moment."

"Help each other to move beyond distrust, fear and hostility. Remember that we become what we think about all day, remember that our thoughts turn into actions, just as your thoughts about getting married turned into this action today. Teach your children to strive toward inner beauty not just outward appearance; to seek knowledge rather than achievement; to respect other's rights and property; to seek tolerance and avoid arrogance; strive for ethical actions rather than controlling others, and, to seek peace of mind not just pieces of property."

"If there is anyone present, who knows of any just cause why this couple may not be lawfully joined in marriage, make it known or forever after keep your peace."

"If you, _____, and you, _____, have freely and deliberately chosen each other as partners in this holy estate, and you know of no just cause why you may not be so united, will you join your right hands, and now, will you join your left hands."

(To groom):

"Do you, _____, solemnly declare in the presence of God and these witnesses that you take this woman, _____, to be your lawfully wedded wife? If so, please answer I will."

"Will you love her, comfort her, honor her, keep her in sickness and in health, and cherish her until death do you part? If so, please answer I will."

(To bride):

"Do you, _____, solemnly declare in the presence of God and these witnesses that you take this man, _____, to be your lawfully wedded husband? If so, please answer I will."

"Will you love him, comfort him, honor him, keep him in sickness and in health, and cherish him until death do you part? If so, please answer I will."

(To the couple):

"Do you have the rings?" (Take the rings from them.) "These wedding rings have neither a beginning nor an end. It is a symbol of everlasting faith and love. May it ever remind you of the solemn vows and obligations that you have this day taken, and keep steadfast therein until the end."

(Hand the ring back to the groom):

"Will you place this ring on the bride's left hand and repeat after me: _____, this ring I give you / in token and in pledge / of our constant faith and abiding love."

(Hand the ring back to the bride):

"Will you place this ring on the groom's left hand and repeat after me: _____, this ring I give you / in token and in pledge / of our constant faith and abiding love."

(If not a double ring ceremony, the bride shall repeat the following):

"By accepting this ring / I give you a token and pledge / of our constant faith and abiding love."

"May these rings (this ring) stand as a sign to you of your desire to live, to love, to create, to build your lives and help the lives of those whom you touch."

"May today's celebration remain with you as the sign of the partnership you have formed. We hope that you will grow and change with circumstance. We hope that you will not be afraid of making mistakes and that you will always be open and honest with each other. We trust that you will learn to accept the changes of life and its wonder — as at this moment you accept the joy of being married. May the love that you feel and share with us today continue to grow deeper and stronger."

"This poem from an Apache Indian Marriage Ceremony captures all that marriage can be. These beautiful thoughts have been spoken to wedding couples for hundreds of years in our country."

"Please face each other."

**Now you will feel no rain
for each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold
for each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no more loneliness
for each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two bodies
but there is only one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place
to enter into the days of togetherness
and may your days be good and long upon the earth.**

"_____ and _____ having consented together in marriage and having witnessed the same before this company and thereto having pledged your faith, by the virtue of the authority vested in me by the State of Nebraska, I pronounce that you are husband and wife."

"You may kiss and embrace."

"Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you, _____ and _____."

(Souvenir Ceremony follows on next page.)

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"Do you, _____, solemnly declare in the presence of God and these witnesses that you take this woman, _____, to be your lawfully wedded wife? If so, please answer I will."

"Will you love her, comfort her, honor her, keep her in sickness and in health, and cherish her until death do you part? If so, please answer I will."

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"Will you place this ring on the bride's left hand and repeat after me: _____, this ring I give you / in token and in pledge / of our constant faith and abiding love."

"Will you place this ring on the groom's left hand and repeat after me: _____, this ring I give you / in token and in pledge / of our constant faith and abiding love."

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*Go now to your dwelling place
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and may your days be good and long upon the earth.*

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witnessed the same before this company and thereto having pledged your faith, by
the virtue of the authority vested in me by the State of Nebraska, I pronounce that
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